

are subject to brutal and ongoing repression from the government. Perhaps "the world's largest democracy" could learn a thing or two from the meeting in New York.

We should stop our aid to India and we should demand self-determination for all the people of South Asia so that they can live in peace, freedom, harmony, and prosperity, as they do here in America and other Western democracies.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to put the article from India-West into the RECORD.

[From India-West, June 2, 2006]

SIKH, CATHOLIC LEADERS MEET IN NEW YORK
(By a Staff Reporter)

Representatives of the World Sikh Council-America Region met with Catholic leaders in New York in an all-day event hosted by the Religions for Peace-USA. The Sikh group has said.

Dr. Manohar Singh, the group's chairperson, and Dr. Tarunjit Singh, chair of the group's Interfaith Committee, led the Sikhs.

The U.S. Catholic Conference of Bishops' delegation was headed by Rev. James Massa, executive director of its Secretariat for Ecumenical and Interfaith Affairs.

Monsignor Felix Machado, undersecretary of the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue at the Vatican in Rome, was a special guest and adviser.

Two observers of Religions for Peace attended the May 20 meeting.

"The universal message of Sikhism respects pluralism and we welcome our Catholic friends with open arms," Manohar Singh said. "This dialogue is an opportunity for our communities to begin a conversation at the highest level on how we may be able to work with each other in trust and friendship to make this world a more peaceful and just place for all."

Machado responded by saying the Catholic Church appreciates this dialogue with the Sikh community. "Sikhs respect us, not suspect us," he said.

Sikh and Catholic leaders expressed shared concerns over the challenges faced by immigrant communities in the U.S., the curtailment of religious freedom and human rights in South Asia, and the challenges of secularism to both religious communities.

The participants said they would meet again this year with a focus on "Divinity, Humanity and Creation." They also pledged to continue to meet at least once a year through a working committee.

After the meeting, the Catholic and Sikh participants visited the Mata Sahib Kaur Gurdwara Sahib in Glen Cove, N.Y., joined the evening service and partook of langar meal.

A TRIBUTE TO STANLEY HENRY

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 16, 2006

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Stanley Henry, a distinguished member of the Brooklyn, New York community. It behooves us today to honor a man who has exhibited the will to succeed, and the insatiable drive to bring his goals into fruition.

Stanley Henry is a man that went from working menial night jobs and attending high

school during the day, to owning his own hardware distribution store and contracting firm and being one of the most respected men in Brooklyn.

Mr. Henry was born in British Guyana, South America in 1945. While he attended the Mackenzie Government and Technical High School during the day, he worked nights, a feat especially commendable for a teenager. After graduating in 1965, Mr. Henry worked as a construction apprentice with the Canadian Bauxite Company. In 1967, he migrated to Brooklyn. Not needing much time to adapt to a new culture, Mr. Henry graduated from The Delhanty Institute of Structural Design within 2 years. He then secured a position with Ewell W. Finley Engineer PC and for the next 10 years, Mr. Henry stayed with this company. While still employed with the company, Mr. Henry continued his education. He graduated from both the Institute of Design Construction adding to his structural engineering experience and from NYC Technical College to enhance his administrative skills.

Mr. Henry later moved on to establish Annie Henry General Hardware, his own building materials supply business named after his beloved mother. The name was later changed to Henry Wholesale & Resale Distributors, LLC. He is also the proud owner of Henry Builders Inc., a contracting firm that not only knows the people that it serves, but the people it serves knows and loves him. Mr. Henry's businesses have been a fixture on Broadway for over 35 years and he is affectionately known as the "Mayor of Broadway" and "The Master Builder."

Mr. Henry embodies the entrepreneurial spirit that is essential to any small business.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that it is incumbent on this body to recognize the accomplishments of Stanley Henry as he offers his talents and services for the betterment of our community.

Mr. Speaker, Stanley Henry's selfless service has continuously demonstrated a level of altruistic dedication and today we should recognize this man and pay homage to a life truly worth celebrating.

TRIBUTE TO THE GAY, LESBIAN, BISEXUAL & TRANSGENDER COMMUNITY CENTER OF COLORADO

HON. DIANA DeGETTE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 16, 2006

Ms. DeGETTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commend the exceptional leadership and invaluable contributions of the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Center of Colorado, "The Center," on the occasion of its 30th anniversary. It is fitting that we recognize The Center for its record of extraordinary service in providing support and advocacy for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender, GLBT, communities in the 1st Congressional District and throughout Colorado.

The Center has been on the front lines of progress since its inception and has proven to be a powerful force in transforming the land-

scape of our State. Founded in Denver in 1976, The Center is a statewide, nonprofit community center and is one of the oldest organizations serving GLBT communities in the country. It is a powerful advocate on a broad range of issues that affect GLBT people in our State and is a catalyst for community organizing and providing needed support services.

Health and wellness is a key focus of The Center. Its Healthy Living Program offers extensive health care services including free HIV testing in conjunction with Denver Health, low-cost hepatitis vaccinations, free mammograms for uninsured women, health care provider referrals and access to mental health services. It also devotes sizable effort to community health education as well as disease prevention. The Lesbian Cancer Support Service strives to increase early detection and a higher rate of cancer survival in lesbian and bisexual women. The Center also maintains Rainbow Alley, a drop-in center designed for GLBT youth that provides health care services, counseling and referral. Youth have access to a medical clinic, computer lab, kitchen and the Terry Mangan Library, all of which are drug, alcohol, tobacco and hate free.

The Center's advocacy and legal initiatives have done much to advance the cause of civil liberty and provide necessary assistance to those who experience discrimination, harassment and unequal treatment. The Legal Initiatives Project, CLIP, was founded in 1992 to challenge a discriminatory amendment to the Colorado Constitution. Amendment II would have precluded any action by the State or local governments designed to protect GLBT people. Amendment II passed by a slim margin, but due to CLIP's leadership, a lawsuit was filed and injunctive relief was granted to prevent the measure from taking effect. The decision was appealed to the United States Supreme Court and a national coalition of civil rights groups joined CLIP to uphold the lower court ruling. In a historic decision—*Romer v. Evans*, 517 U.S. 620 (1996)—the Supreme Court held that Amendment II was unconstitutional under the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. In 2000, CLIP merged with The Center and became its legal services program. It accomplishes its mission through the CLIP Legal Hotline, civil rights litigation and mediation, media work and public education. CLIP focuses on cases and issues that move the civil rights agenda forward serve the most oppressed and disadvantaged in the GLBT communities.

We are indeed fortunate to have The Center in our community. It is an invaluable resource and I am deeply appreciative of the good work The Center does in addressing systemic inequalities and providing continuity and stability in the efforts to secure greater equality, justice and participation in our democracy. The Center has helped provide a place at the table for GLBT people. It has provided needed health and community services. In summary, The Center's leadership and engagement has made a real difference in peoples lives and thereby in the communities it serves.

Please join me in commending the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Center of Colorado. It is the strong leadership and meaningful service it provides on a daily basis that continually enhances our lives and builds a better future for all of our people.

CHILD WELFARE LEAGUE OF
AMERICA TESTIMONY

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 16, 2006

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring to your attention Part II of the testimony of the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) when they testified before the Human Resources Subcommittee of the Ways and Means Committee on May 23, 2006.

The purpose of the testimony given was to share with the Subcommittee important measures to improve our nation's child protective services. It is my hope that my colleagues will find this information useful as well as informative as we focus on legislation that addresses the needs and care of our children.

CWLA POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS ON
PROPOSED LEGISLATION

The Reauthorization of Promoting Safe and Stable Families—Of most immediate importance for this Committee is the reauthorization of the Promoting Safe and Stable Families program (PSSF) beyond FY 2006. PSSF supports four vital services that address four different types of families in need: those in need of basic support services to strengthen the family and keep them whole, families being reunified, families we are trying to preserve, and adoptive families in need of support. As you review some of the key needs included in this testimony, the Subcommittee can see how the issues of prevention, aftercare, permanency and stability and maintaining families are all addressed by these categories.

CWLA believes these services and families should continue to be the target for PSSF in a reauthorization bill:

Family Support Services (FSS) were developed to respond to the concerns, interests, and needs of families within a community. Family Support Services are targeted to families with difficulties and concerns related to the proper functioning of the family and care of the children. The focus of the program is on prevention. The services address the need to improve the well-being of a child, family functioning, and the parent's ability to provide for the family, before they are in crisis. In order to reach families in need of assistance, family support programs work with outside community organizations such as schools and child welfare agencies. The aim is to provide temporary relief to families and to teach them how to better nurture their children. Involvement in these services is voluntary. Types of services include parent education, child care relief, and selfhelp groups.

Reunification is the first permanency option states consider for children entering care. Yet, in many ways, it is the most challenging option to achieve in a plan-based, permanent way. We know that forty-eight percent of, or 246,650, children in care on September 30, 2003 had a case plan goal of reunification with their parents or other principal caretaker. At the same time, 151,770 children, or 55 percent of those children who left care in 2003, were returned to their parent's or caretaker's home.

Successful permanency through reunification requires many things, including skilled workers, readily available supportive and treatment resources, clear expectations and service plans, and excellent collaboration across involved agencies. Reunification also requires culturally appropriate support and treatment services for families and the crit-

ical need for after care or postpermanency services to ensure that safety and permanency are maintained following reunification.

Family Preservation Services (FPS) are comprehensive, short-term, intensive services for families delivered primarily in the home and designed to prevent the unnecessary out-of-home placement of children or to promote family reunification. The services are intended to protect a child in a home where allegations of child abuse or neglect have occurred, prevent subsequent abuse or neglect, prevent placement of a child, or reduce the stay for a child in out-of-home care. Families in need of family preservation services are usually referred by public welfare agencies. Services are provided within 24 hours of referral and the family's involvement is voluntary. These services respond to families on a 24-hour basis, including services such as family therapy, budgeting, nutrition, and parenting skills.

Adoption support is an important need as the number of adoptions have increased. There is still more work to be done. Services may include information and referral, case management services, support groups and a range of other services. Of the 523,085 children in foster care in 2003, approximately 119,000 were waiting to be adopted, with 68,000 of these children being free for adoption (parental rights had been terminated). Of the children waiting, 40 percent were black non-Hispanic, 37 percent were white non-Hispanic, 14 percent were Hispanic, and 4 percent were of undetermined ethnicity. In 2003, the median age of children waiting to be adopted was 8.7 years; 3 percent of the children waiting to be adopted were younger than 1 year; 32 percent were ages 1 to 5; 28 percent were ages 6 to 10; 30 percent were 11 to 15; and 6 percent were 16 to 18.

Use Of \$40 Million PSSF Increase—CWLA supports the extension of the \$40 million in mandatory funding that was included in the Deficit Reduction Act and we want to work with the Subcommittee and members of Congress to see that PSSF is at a minimum fully funded at the level of \$505 million as adopted by this Subcommittee in 2001. We feel there a need for more. As indicated earlier in our testimony, forty percent of children substantiated as abused or neglected do not receive follow up services. We also feel it bears repeating that there is need for more reunification, adoption and other support services than PSSF attempts to address. To truly reach the goal of safe and stable families this country needs to go much further in its funding and priority of the entire child welfare system.

CWLA recognizes that the Subcommittee and members of Congress see the \$40 million in mandatory funding as an opportunity to address some additional issues in the child welfare field. If that is the decision of the Congress we strongly urge you to make this the first step in a comprehensive strategy over the next few years to more fully address the needs of these children.

The draft legislation includes a workforce element tied to caseworker visits. CWLA supports regular and on-going visits to children in care. In the child welfare field visitation is not an isolated service or stand-alone intervention. Rather it is part of a larger case planning process. To reach this visitation goal we need a comprehensive strategy to strengthen the child welfare workforce.

We would not want a system of care where too few workers with very high caseloads are simply meeting an outcome measure of numbers. Rather each state should be assisted in implementing a long term workforce strategy that sets goals around reduced workforce turnover, higher education levels, adequate case loads, initial training and on-going

training, adequate supervision and the proper partnerships with educational institutions and other partners in workforce development.

For each state this will be different so we would urge the Subcommittee to craft legislation around such a flexible allocation of funding and planning that will work with states to develop outcomes and provide related data that can demonstrate progress toward a comprehensive workforce strategy or goals. Again, this is a long-term strategy that requires federal, state and local partnerships. It should also be recognized that \$40 million for fifty states may limit the kind of progress we all seek in advancing this goal. In addition, it will be difficult to determine how this designation of \$40 million will supplement and not supplant current state efforts since it will overlap with Title IV-E Administrative funding used for these critical purposes but we do highlight that additional resources are needed.

Possible Improvements—Access For Tribal Communities—In your reauthorization, CWLA suggests that the Subcommittee include the recommendations being proposed by the National Indian Child Welfare Association, National Congress of American Indians and the Association of American Indian Affairs. Their joint proposal would set the reserved amounts of funding for tribal governments at 3 percent in both the mandatory and discretionary funding. A consortium of tribal governments could also apply for the funding and we endorse an authorization of a tribal court improvement program.

Better Data—As part of the application process, states submit information on how they intend to allocate their PSSF funding. This information should be collected and included in an annual report by HHS. We also urge the Subcommittee to include legislative language that would direct HHS to work with states to determine how to compile an annual report that would provide information on how funds are actually spent and would include information on families and children served. The annual reports by HHS on the Social Services Block Grant have only been issued since 1998, yet they have provided a stronger picture of why that funding is important to so many human service programs.

Mentoring of Children of Prisoners—We commend the Committee for including the reauthorization of the Mentoring Children of Prisoners program in this legislation. Mentoring for this population is an effective way to engage at-risk children and youth, provides connections to caring adults, and perhaps most importantly, builds relations among family members during and after incarceration. We know there are many areas in the country today where children of prisoners are not able to access this mentoring service due to lack of availability. Expansion is necessary and the Committee is to be commended for focusing on this. We urge the committee to carefully consider the following issues as this new initiative is implemented.

Currently there are 218 federally funded sites around the country where this mentoring is taking place, involving thousands of children. It would be tragic for these children to have their mentoring disrupted or ended prematurely. We urge the Committee to include provisions to allow these efforts to continue.

Researchers and mentoring experts have concluded that children facing multiple developmental risks benefit more from mentoring than other children; however, they require a higher quality of mentoring program and are more likely to be adversely affected by poor quality mentoring. We urge the Committee to examine carefully the expertise and background of all potential national